

and dedication to public safety, Officer Niemi earned the respect and admiration of those with whom he worked.

Officer Niemi will long be remembered for his courage, service, and bravery. He will be missed by all who knew him. Officer Niemi is survived by his parents Rudie and Mildred Niemi; brother Jim; wife Dionne; daughter Gabrielle; and stepson Josh Hewitt. I extend my deepest sympathies to his family.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN NIGER

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise to express my deep concern about the unnecessary suffering that is occurring in the African country of Niger. Last year's severe drought and locust infestation destroyed most of Niger's harvest and the fodder necessary for keeping livestock. As a result, an estimated 3.6 million people including 800,000 children under the age of 5—are now facing starvation. Aid workers in the field describe the situation as desperate, and report that children are dying daily and families have turned to a diet of acacia leaves and grass.

I urge the administration to continue to respond and to work with other donors to ensure Niger's humanitarian needs are met. In particular, it is crucial that USAID make certain the recently announced \$7 million in additional emergency funds go immediately towards alleviating the hunger in the hardest hit areas: the agro-pastoral regions of Maradi and Tillaberi and the pastoral regions of Tahoua and Zinder. Reportedly, there is a shortage of therapeutic feeding centers and clinics, and weakened villagers cannot manage the travel required to reach them.

We also need to address long-term food security issues in the Sahel, where drought and famine regularly afflict these poorest nations. Earlier this year I traveled to three of Niger's neighbors—Algeria, Mali, and Chad. I heard firsthand accounts of how devastating the locust crisis was, and I heard a consensus regarding the need for permanent mechanisms to facilitate crisis response and to prevent emergencies in the future. As the tragedy in Niger demonstrates, even when governments, international organizations, and NGOs are able to anticipate food insecurity almost a year in advance and implement their assistance programs, we can still have a crisis. Unfortunately, it sometimes takes media coverage of already emaciated children to jolt donor countries into emergency action. We need to remain alert and responsive to World Food Program appeals for extra funding before the starvation begins, and we need to stay committed to long-term efforts to improve food security throughout the region.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING GUS FLOROS

• Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, today I would like to honor a wonderful Virginian and American, Mr. Gus Floros, who this year is celebrating his 50th Anniversary of immigrating to America.

Born on May 25, 1928, in Greece, Gus Floros immigrated to the United States in 1955 settling in Harrisonburg, VA. He quickly went to work in his aunt and uncle's restaurant, Jess' Lunch, on Main Street in Harrisonburg. By 1967 he had purchased the restaurant and with a hands on approach and a commitment to excellence, he made Jess' Lunch one of Harrisonburg's finest eating establishments. Gus has expanded Jess' Lunch dramatically and in 2003 even built a sister location called Jess' Lunch 2.

Gus Floros is a fine example of the great American dream coming true. He is an inspiration to many. Upon his arrival in America, Gus had just one dollar in his pocket. Today he owns two successful restaurants in Harrisonburg that attract both local residents and those who are passing by on interstate 81. Through his entrepreneurial spirit, Gus Floros has made Jess' Lunch an eatery known across the Commonwealth. I often stop in to see Gus and have one of his tasty hotdogs or hamburgers whenever I am in Harrisonburg. You can always find quick, friendly service and a satisfying meal at Jess' Lunch and Gus is always there working just as hard as he did back in 1955.

I congratulate Gus Floros on 50 years of prosperity and good fortune, and I wish him continued success as he continues to serve the residents of Harrisonburg with a warm smile and a hearty meal.●

TRIBUTE TO JIM BERNSTEIN

• Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a North Carolinian who passed away on June 12, 2005, but will always be dear to our hearts. Jim Bernstein's work ended as it began—in selfless service to underserved communities in need. A career arc that began with volunteer service with the U.S. Peace Corps in Morocco ended with post-retirement volunteer service to the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services' rural health initiatives. In between, Jim provided the Nation and the State of North Carolina with more than 30 years of distinguished leadership in a variety of health and social policy arenas, including rural health, health care finance, public health, social service delivery, medicaid, nonprofit management and health care system innovation.

After earning a bachelor of arts degree in political economy from John Hopkins University in 1964 and a masters of hospital administration from the University of Michigan in 1968, Jim

began his lifelong health care service as the director of Indian Health Services for Northern New Mexico. In 1970, he was awarded a 3-year fellowship in the U.S. Public Health Service, and relocated to North Carolina to concentrate his studies on rural health and fuel a passion that would serve as the basis for the next 35 years of his career.

In 1973, while still in his 20's, Jim became the director of the Nation's first Office of Rural Health, located in North Carolina. In that role—which he held for nearly 30 years—Jim spearheaded the development and implementation of a medical recruitment service designed to help rural and medically underserved communities recruit physicians and other health care providers. Since then, more than 2,500 physicians, nurse practitioners, physicians' assistants, dentists and other health care professionals have been recruited to North Carolina. He also directed the development of 83 community-owned health centers, and led the creation of Community Care of North Carolina, a care management program that today provides access to high-quality, cost-effective care to more than 643,000 North Carolinians. Those efforts—and countless others—have positioned the State's rural health function as a nationally recognized model of excellence.

Throughout his career, Jim served as a director, chairman or consultant to more than two dozen professional organizations, including: National Rural Health Association, where he was president from May 1994 to May 1995; National Advisory Committee on Rural Health—U.S. Public Health Service, Office of Rural Health Policy, 1994 to 1995; Institute of Medicine—Committee for Guidance in Designing a National Health Care Disparities Report, Washington, DC 2001 to 2005; Commissioner, Prospective Payment Assessment Commission, where he was selected by the U.S. Congress to advise the body on Medicare finance; 1990 to 1996; chairman, Advisory Panel to the Office of Technology Assessment's Study on Rural Health Care, U.S. Congress; 1988; Delegate, National Medical Tour to the People's Republic of China, 1978; Consultant, National Academy of Sciences/Institute of Medicine—Task Force on Study of Health Needs in Egypt, Cairo, Egypt; 1978. His extraordinary commitment to lifelong community service to these and dozens of other organizations garnered him the North Carolina Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 2005.

In 1982, upon the recommendation of a State legislative study commission, Jim helped establish the North Carolina Foundation for Advanced Health Programs, Inc, NCFAHP. From 1982 to 2005, he served as the foundation's president, helping it spearhead projects targeting the health care needs of low-income underserved communities. Under Jim's leadership, NCFAHP secured more than 40 grants totaling more than \$17 million, allowing it to